questions submitted after the second meeting of the legislative session were answered during the third meeting of the session; the total number of questions received after the second meeting of the legislative session and admitted for the third meeting and how many of those questions were answered during the third meeting of the session;

(e) the total number of questions received for the three meetings of the legislative session; and how many of them remained unanswered at the close of the session; and the reason for not answering those questions?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—(a), (b), (c) & (d) Vide statement appended. (*Appendix IV.*)

(e) Questions received—627.

Do unanswered—156. The nature of the questions themselves, the large number of questions that had to be dealt with in all and the amount of work devolving on the Secretariat and Heads of Departments are the only reasons for not answering all the questions.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—The answer is given that only 156 questions out of 627 questions remain unanswered. I desire to know whether better arrangement might not be made for answering a more satisfactory number of questions in the future. We want to get answers for as many questions as possible.

President.—We do not agree with you in that this is an unsatisfactory number. As against 627 questions put, only 156 questions were left unanswered.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—You answered so many, because we put them so many times We repeated them so many times, and yet 156 remain unanswered. I am drawing the attention of the Council to—

President.—We do not want to withhold any information. We have got a regular process. We have to get the necessary materials from our Heads of Departments.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—I am only asking to expedite.

President.—There need not be any reflection on the Government that they are indifferent to the answering of questions. That is all that I want to point out.

Political and Constitutional Reforms in the State.

11. Mr. K. T. Mathew.—Will the Government be pleased to state.—

(a) whether the Government is not aware that a meeting of Cochinites residing in Bombay was held last year with Mr.

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M. A. Menon, B. A., Ll. B., in the chair, and that in the first resolution it was said that 'in the light of the political progress already made in British India ..... pray for an early extension of the principle of reforms now benevolently initiated' ;

(b) whether any steps will be taken by the Government in the near future for extending the principle of reforms as prayed for ?

Mr. A. K Vengu Ayyar.—(a) No such resolution is forthcoming.

(b) The Government have not considered the matter.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—I had sent some resolutions to the Political Agent, and the Political Agent was kind enough to send me a reply acknowledging them. Our Government had not even the courtesy to reply me when the same resolutions were sent to them.

President.—You wanted only acknowledgment ?

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—At least acknowledgment.

President.—That is your *observation*. That is not a supplementary question.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—Especially when resolutions passed at important public meetings are submitted !

President.—The only thing is that the resolutions might be considered, and Government might have thought of sending a final reply after due consideration. Otherwise, once an acknowledgment, then consideration, and then answer to the result of the consideration and all that is impossible.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—We want acknowledgment. In future, will the Government be pleased to do so ?

President (to Secretary).—What is the practice when you get copies of resolutions ? Do you then and there acknowledge ?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—Sometimes we do ; sometimes we do not.

President.—There must be a principle. Is there no fixed rule on that ?

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—I find it very difficult to get answers from the Government when letters are sent. I had to send communications after communications to ascertain whether the Government have got the letters I have sent.

President.—Sometimes it goes through so many processes—what is called, lodging, recording in the office, you see. So that sometimes answers are not given. If there is an order passed, it is communicated. This lodging and recording are

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

not orders which are intended to be communicated. I do not know whether it is a practice to communicate such orders as recorded.

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—No.

President.—This lodging also you don't ?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—No.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—Then how can a person who sends a petition know whether the Government has taken any action on it ? Many persons are sending petitions after petitions.

President.—But we consider the question and then give an answer. We do not make it a point to answer any petition submitted.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—Acknowledgment will suffice for the time being. When I addressed a few resolutions to the Political Agent, he was kind enough to send me an answer. It was the same resolutions that I sent to our Government, and I received no reply.

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—You could have sent it by registered post.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—I did not know that our Government would not care to acknowledge. If I had known that, I would have registered. What is the reason for not considering the matter, when the matter was brought to the attention of the Government by resolutions passed at an important public meeting ?

President.—The Government did not consider it necessary. It is not always possible to consider resolutions passed at public meetings.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—Is it because that they are about political reforms?

President.—The Government probably might have thought it too early to take up the matter for consideration.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—We have now a nominated President and a nominated Deputy President. It is regrettable, that after receiving resolutions passed at important public meetings, Government did not consider them.

President.—Is there not a third position ?

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—The Government should have considered the matter. Without considering the resolutions, how can they know that they are important or not?

President.—If you think they have not considered, take it so.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—Will it be considered soon ?

President.—The Government are not in a position to say it now.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—Are political reforms so unimportant a matter for the Government not to deserve the consideration of the Government?

President.—That question does not arise.

12. Mr. K. T. Mathew.—Will the Government be pleased to state.—

(a) whether the Government has received the following resolution passed at a public meeting held at Kunnamkulam under the presidentship of Mr. Gothasankara Valia Raja of Punnathur:—' In view of the fact that the high standard of culture of the people in our State warrants a re-examination and revision of constitutional reforms, this meeting requests His Highness the Maharaja to be pleased to appoint a committee consisting mainly of non-official members to draft a scheme of constitutional reforms revising the Regulation VIII of 1098 and the rules made thereunder with a view to associate the people in an increasing measure with the Government of the State' ;

(b) whether any reply was sent or the receipt of this resolution was acknowledged by the Government, and if the answer is in the negative, what is the reason for not doing so ;

(c) what action has been taken in the matter of appointing a committee for the purpose mentioned in the resolution, and if no action has been taken yet,

(d) whether the matter will receive the early attention of the Government and a committee will be appointed ;

(e) whether the Government has not received the following resolution also passed at the same meeting:—'That this meeting recommends that the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin be pleased to make the necessary amendment in the Cochin Legislative Council Regulation in order that the President of the Council, instead of the *ex-officio* Diwan of Cochin, be nominated by His Highness and that the Deputy President be elected by the non-official members of the Council' ;

(f) whether this matter has been considered by the Government of His Highness the Maharaja, and if so, whether the Government is willing to introduce the reform mentioned in the resolution, and if the Government is against introducing this reform now, to give the reason for it ?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—(a) Yes.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

(b) No. Government considered that no reply or acknowledgment was necessary.

(c) No action has been taken.

(d) Government have not considered the matter.

(e) Yes.

(f) Vide answer to (d).

The plight of labourers in the Palappilli Estate.

13. Dr. A. G. Menon.—With reference to the answer given to the supplementary question No. 319 of legislative session of Kumbham 1101, will the Government be pleased to state.—

(1) whether the writer of the article was examined;

if not, will the Government be pleased to direct the officer to examine him;

(2) will the Government be pleased to place on the table the report of the Inspector, A. Division, and the statement of the writer of the article?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—(1) The whereabouts of the writer of the article are unknown. Hence no examination was possible.

(2) Copy of the report is appended. (*Vide Appendix V.*)

The appointment of Mr. U. Kandir Menon as the Trichur Sirkar Vakil.

14. Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Will the Government be pleased to state:—

(a) Whether, in the appointment of Mr. U. Kandir Menon as Sirkar Vakil of Trichur, consideration was given to the claims of other practitioners of that Bar enjoying more lucrative practice;

(b) whether any other vakil or vakils were consulted or whether the vacancy was advertised or whether Mr. Kandir Menon has submitted his application in writing;

(c) if the answer to (b) is in the negative, the special reason that induced the Government to appoint him under such exceptional circumstances;

(d) whether this appointment will be considered a precedent in filling up the vacancy to be created by the retirement of Mr. Ayyakkutti, District Judge?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—(a) The Government paid due consideration to all the relevant circumstances connected with the appointment of a Sirkar Vakil.

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